

DISCUSSION POINTS

2003 Annual School and District Ratings

Absolute Ratings

1. All Schools (K-2 PRIMARY, ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOLS)
2001-2002 and 2002-2003 School Report Card Ratings
Number and Percentage of School Report Cards

Rating	2003 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2002 Absolute Performance Rating Number (%)	2003 Improvement Rating Number (%)	2002 Improvement Rating Number (%)
Excellent	217 (19.9)	191 (18.1)	75 (7.0)	94 (8.9)
Good	352 (32.3)	354 (33.5)	174 (16.1)	183 (17.4)
Average	324 (29.8)	304 (28.7)	89 (8.2)	186 (17.6)
Below Average	150 (13.8)	159 (15.0)	275 (25.5)	311 (29.5)
Unsatisfactory	46 (4.2)	50 (4.7)	466 (43.2)	280 (26.6)
New/Special - No Rating	15	22	16	26
Total	1089 (100)	1058* (100)	1079* (100)	1054* (100)

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding. Some schools may have received more than one report card if the school contained more than one organizational grade level (Elementary, Middle, High).

*24 schools receiving Absolute and Improvement ratings in 2003 were missing 2002 data. Nine high schools receiving 2003 Absolute Ratings did not receive Improvement Ratings in 2003.

**Based on data from the SC Department of Education, October 2003.

2. The number of schools rated *Unsatisfactory* or *Below Average* has decreased over time.

	2001	2002	2003
<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	71 (6.4%)	60 (5.2%)	46 (4.2%)
<i>Below Average</i>	200 (18.1%)	170 (14.7%)	150 (13.7%)
3. There were changes to school absolute ratings from 2002 to 2003 in the following manner:
 - 154 schools elevated their ratings
 - 771 schools maintained their ratings
 - 112 schools lowered their ratings
4. Even with changes in the high school rating criteria (addition of graduation rate criterion), the number of high schools rated *Excellent* or *Good* rose to 124 in 2003 from 119 in 2002.
5. 10.4% of schools with poverty composite of 90% or greater earned an absolute rating of *Excellent* or *Good*. 12.5% of schools with a poverty composite of 80% or greater earned an absolute rating of *Excellent* or *Good*.
6. There is movement to the outer ends of the rating scale for school districts.
 - The number of districts rated *Excellent* has grown from three to nine.
 - The number of districts rated *Unsatisfactory* has grown from two to eight.

Improvement Ratings

7. There were changes to school improvement ratings from 2002 to 2003 in the following manner:
 - 196 schools elevated their rating
 - 378 schools maintained their rating
 - 461 schools earned lower improvement ratings
8. The number and percentage of elementary and middle schools rated unsatisfactory increased. These ratings likely reflect declines in performance on PACT English/language arts as students progress to upper elementary and middle grades.
9. High school improvement ratings rose. The calculation incorporated like data from 2002 and 2003 for the LIFE scholarship criterion and did not include graduation rate.
10. 67 schools benefited from the incentive for improving the performance of historically underachieving student groups. When these groups of students demonstrate gains greater than the average gains for all students statewide, the school's improvement ratings are elevated one level.
11. 14.6% of schools with a poverty composite of 90% or greater earned an improvement rating of *Excellent* or *Good*. 12.8% of schools with a poverty composite of 80% or greater earned an improvement ratings of *Excellent* or *Good*.
12. Of the 50 schools rated *Unsatisfactory* in 2002, 36% earned Average or above improvement ratings in 2003. 27% of schools rated *Below Average* in 2002 earned Average or above improvement ratings in 2003.

Critical Issues

Exercise patience to solve historical underachievement and continuing to support improvement strategies

Sustain the gains in ratings and student performance made by schools emerging from unsatisfactory status

Utilize the student performance data to understand how schools and the education system can improve

Implement multi-disciplinary strategies to ensure maximum impact from school services in communities with deep social and economic challenges.